

Message Text

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46

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 281315Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5593

S E C R E T TEHRAN 1658

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, ENRG, IO, IR

SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN TASK GROUP

REF: A. STATE 245195

B. TEHRAN 8624

1. CONSORTIUM REPRESENTATIVES VARIAN AND WILLMAN HAVE AGAIN CALLED EMBASSY'S ATTENTION TO THEIR CONVICTION THAT SUPPLY OF PRODUCT TO TASK GROUP BY NIOC IS BREACH OF NEW PURCHASE SALES AGREEMENT. (IN FACT, ACCORDING TO VARIAN, MINA GAVE HIM ASSURANCES THAT JANUARY 30 LIFTING WOULD BE LAST NIOC SALE TO TASK FORCE.) VARIAN AND WILLMAN SAY SOME GOI OFFICIALS, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH THEM, HAVE EXPRESSED SOMEWHAT CAVALIER ATTITUDE TOWARDS LETTER AND SPIRIT OF NEW AGREEMENT. THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT USG, BY PURCHASING PRODUCT FROM NIOC IN A MANNER THEY CONSIDER ILLEGAL, MAY BE REINFORCING THIS GOI ATTITUDE.

2. WE SUGGESTED (AND THEY AGREED) THAT MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS OF PROCEEDING WOULD BE FOR MEMBERS TO APPROACH USG IN WASHINGTON, STATE THEIR CONCERN, AND OFFER TO SUPPLY PRODUCT (WHICH THEY MIGHT DO AT LOWER PRICES). THEY HAVE ADVISED MEMBERS TO DO THIS. VARIAN HAS ALSO DISCUSSED MATTER TWICE WITH NIOC OFFICIALS. ON ONE OCCASION DR. PARVIZ MINA REPORTEDLY ASSURED HIM THAT NIOC WOULD NOT LOAD ANY MORE PRODUCTS FOR TASK GROUP AFTER JANUARY 30. VARIAN THEN LEARNED FURTHER LOADINGS HAD BEEN SCHEDULED AND APPRAISED DR. FALLAH OF THE PROBLEM. FALLAH, JUST RETURNED FROM EUROPE, PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE QUESTION.

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3. VARIAN SHARES OUR VIEW THAT IF THIS SUPPLY OPERATION IS IMPROPER, PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR GETTING IT SWITCHED FROM NIOC TO CONSORTIUM MEMBERS LIES WITH MEMBERS THEMSELVES. NEVERTHELESS VARIAN FEELS THAT POSITION OF BEING ACCOMPLICE TO

NIOC'S AT BEST HIGHLY DUBIOUS INTERPRETATION OF NEW AGREEMENT
IS NOT IDEAL ONE FOR USG TO FIND ITSELF IN.

4. IF CONSORTIUM GROUP APPROACHES STATE OR DOD, WE SUGGEST
THAT THEY BE ADVISED TO RAISE MATTER WITH NIOC AND OFFER TO
MEET USN REQUIREMENTS IN FUTURE, IF GOI HAS NO POLITICAL OB-
JECTIONS. IF THEY WISH, CONSORTIYM OFFICERS COULD SAY THAT USG
IS WILLING TO LIFT PRODUCTS FROM CONSORTIUM MEMBERS OR NIOC.
WE WANT TO ASSURE THAT IF THEREIS TO BE A TRANSFER OF SUPPLIES,
IT BE DONE SMOOTHLY AND DIPLOMATICALLY SO THAT, IF NECESSARY
IN FUTURE, WE MAY AGAIN HAVE EMERGENCY ACCESS TO NIOC FUEL.
HELMS

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